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characterized the first, and which places the author, in his masterly grasp of the subject, foremost among the living writers on Coleoptera.

Each family of beetles is fully characterized, with detailed descriptions of the subfamilies, tribes, and brief diagnoses of all the genera, together with interesting remarks of a general nature. The work when completed will necessarily be a complement as well as supplement of Lacordaire's famous "Genera of Coleoptera," and will invite the attention of European entomologists, while in America it will be the Coleopterist's *vade mecum.*

New North American Beetles.*—Dr. LeConte, in this second part of "New Species of North American Coleoptera," describes eighty-nine new species of beetles, mostly from the Pacific coast. A number of new genera are also characterized.

BOTANY.

Flowering of Aplectrum.—With us the flowering of *Aplectrum hyemale* Nutt. appears to be an exceedingly rare event; so much so, that close watching of the plant in our woods, for several years, on my part, has been unrewarded by a single instance of its blossoming. The experience of others corroborates the conclusion that it is a shy bloomer, at least in Michigan. I am anxious for information on the point referred to, as regards other localities. A friend once succeeded in obtaining the flowers by taking up the plants in the spring, and keeping them in saucers of the rich black mould which the Aplectrum loves so well, thoroughly moistened. A plant which I once potted sent up a fine scape, several inches high, but, owing to the want of proper care during my absence from home, it did not come to perfection.

The Aplectrum was formerly well represented in the woods north of Detroit; but the encroachment of the city is fast destroying the station which was remarkable for the abundance of this rather scarce plant. However, it is, even now, far from exhausted. On the 20th of April, 1873, I took from a space about ten feet square, in a piece of beech woods, thirty of these plants, which I transferred to my garden, in the hope of seeing them blossom. I shall duly communicate the result. Some years ago, I gave several handsome roots to a Boston friend, for cultivation; but I have not heard since regarding them. Some which I have kept potted for three years invariably send up every summer their large, many-plaited leaves, which remain throughout the winter as usual; but the flowers are not produced. It may be that, in order to procure the desired result, the pot should not be kept housed during winter, but remain plunged in the open ground.

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*New Species of North American Coleoptera. Prepared for the Smithsonian Institution by John L. LeConte, M.D. Part ii. (Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections (264), Washington, May–June, 1873. 8vo. pp. 71.

I have thought that perhaps the destruction of the native forest, depriving the plant of some element necessary to its perfect development, is the cause of its so seldom or never blossoming here. This is a suggestion worthy of note as regards the history of other plants as well as of this one. Of late years the Aplectrum is, with us, of less luxuriant growth than formerly.—HENRY GILLMAN, *Detroit*, *Michigan.*

A YEW FLOWERING IN WINTER.—About six weeks ago I nipped a small spray off a dwarf yew tree, protruding through the snow, in my neighbor's garden. It was my intention to press it; but for immediate convenience it was put in a glass of water, in the sitting room, and for some time no more was thought about it. A few days ago (Feb. 7), I was astonished to find a number of full blown flowers on the spray. These pretty, diminutive objects were accompanied with an interesting phenomenon. The anthers kept up a little fusillade of explosions, throwing off the yellow pollen in tiny clouds. My thumb nail, which happened to be near one of the little globular catkins about as large as a canary's eye, was quite yellow with the ejected powder. I shook off some on the slide of a microscope. They were, in form, when under a lens of high power, like angular pebbles, and although I had barely touched the slide with my nail, yet the number of pollen grains under the microscope was innumerable. To me, this affair was intensely interesting, and a very pleasant episode in a sick room. The entire process can doubtless be repeated by any one, with the certainty of success, even in midwinter. The pretty little strangers still continue blooming on my table, and impart a cheeriness to this unusually bleak St. Valentine's Day.—S. L., *in Monmouth Democrat*, *Freehold*, *N. J.*

VARIATIONS IN MEDEOLA AND UVULARIA.—On the 17th of June, 1872, I found in the woods near Fredericton, N. B., a specimen of *Medeola Virginica* (not rare in these parts), possessing the following unusual characteristics.

The whole plant was about eighteen inches high. Instead of the usual whorl of leaves near the middle of the stem, the whole of these were clustered at the summit, there producing a sort of double whorl, of twelve leaves in all, the lower and outer being of the usual size and gradually becoming smaller and oval-lanceolate towards the top, thus embracing the upper whorl of three leaves usually found beneath the flower. The latter was still more anomalous in character, the *single* blossom (which was *erect*, and not recurved, upon a short stout peduncle) having one petal recurved between two of the sepals, which with the remaining petals were alike and spreading, with incurved edges. Within the perianth were four other bodies, apparently petals, but somewhat stamen-like in aspect, followed by three good and three apparently abortive stamens, the whole surrounding *six* dark purple stigmas! Are these results the effect of an effort at reversion, or are they due to a partial consolidation of the two or more flowers usually found in the same situation — or both?

Another curiosity, though less remarkable than the last, and recently observed by me, is a specimen of *Uvularia sessilifolia* possessing *three* well formed flowers instead of the solitary one or rarely two, described in Gray's Manual as usual with the plant. Both of the above specimens were preserved and are now in my herbarium.—L. W. BAILEY.

A NEW BALLAST WAIF. — Kaighn's Point, opposite Philadelphia — a place where ballast is discharged — is noted for the foreign plants which appear there year after year, some of which are disposed to remain. To the list of such plants which has been published we may now add a remarkable one, *Calycera balsamitifolia*, a native of Buenos Ayres, a representative of a singular small family, nearly allied to *Compositæ*, and peculiar to extra-tropical South America. It was collected by Mr. Isaac Burk, and determined by Dr. H. Leffmann of Philadelphia.—A. G.